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In re Application of FISHER et al.
Application No.: 10/579,513
PCT No.: PCT/US04/38130
Int. Filing: 15 November 2004
Priority Date: 14 November 2003
Attorney Docket No.: KCK-002
For: DEEP WELL IRRIGATION PUMP

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: DECISION ON
:
: RENEWED PETITION
:
: UNDER 37 CFR 1.47(a)
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This is a decision on applicant's Petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a), filed in the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) on 24 May 2007, to accept the application without the signature of joint inventor, Abdilkadir Musa.

BACKGROUND

On 12 May 2006, applicant filed a transmittal letter (PTO-1390) requesting entry into the national stage in the United States of America under 35 U.S.C. § 371. Filed with the Transmittal Letter was, *inter alia*, the requisite basic national fee.

On 28 February 2007, a Notification of Missing Requirements (FORM PCT/DO/EO/905) was mailed to applicant indicating *inter alia*, that an oath or declaration, in accordance with 37 CFR 1.497(a) and (b), was required.

On 24 May 2007, applicant filed a petition along with a declaration, executed by the joint inventors on behalf of the nonsigning inventor. The petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) in an attempt to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4) requested the acceptance of the application without the signature of inventor, Abdilkadir Musa alleging that Mr. Musa refuses to sign the application.

DISCUSSION

A petition under 37 CFR §1.47(a) must be accompanied by (1) the fee under 37 CFR §1.17(g), (2) factual proof that the non-signing joint inventor(s) refuses to execute the application or cannot be reached after diligent effort, (3) a statement of the last known address of the non-signing inventor(s), and (4) an oath or declaration by each available joint inventor on his or her own behalf and on behalf of the non-signing joint inventor(s).

Petitioner satisfied Item (1).

With respect to Item (2) above, Petitioner provided the 20 April 2007 letter statement of Anne Lantey, Manager, Human Resources & Administration for KickStart (assignee), in support of the petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a). Ms. Lantey states that she "mailed a letter to his post office box on August 1, 2006. Mr. Musa has not replied to our request to contact us".

It is clear from her statement and the copy of her letter to Mr. Musa (attached to the statement) that Ms. Lantey did not send a complete copy of the patent application along with declaration to Mr. Musa's last known address. Moreover, although Ms. Lantey states that she has made numerous other attempts to contact Mr. Musa, the details of these contacts (date, time, place) regarding Mr. Musa's refusal to sign the application were not provided. See MPEP 409.03(d) below. Furthermore, the proof of presentation of the application papers was not provided.

From the evidence presented, it is clear that Ms. Lantey did not provide inventor Musa with a complete copy of the application papers, including *specification, claims and drawings* and declaration. What is required is that Mr. Musa be presented with a copy of all of the national stage application papers (oath and declaration, specification, including claims and drawings) for this application.

Section 409.03(d) of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP), Proof of Unavailability or Refusal, states, in pertinent part:

A refusal by an inventor to sign an oath or declaration when the inventor has not been presented with the application papers does not itself suggest that the inventor is refusing to join the application unless it is clear that the inventor understands exactly what he or she is being asked to sign and refuses to accept the application papers. A copy of the application papers should be sent to the last known address of the nonsigning inventor, or, if the nonsigning inventor is represented by counsel, to the address of the nonsigning inventor's attorney.... It is reasonable to require that the inventor be presented with the application papers before a petition under 37 CFR 1.47 is granted since such a procedure ensures that the inventor is apprised of the application to which the oath or declaration is directed. In re Gray, 115 USPQ 80 (Comm'r Pat. 1956)

Where a refusal of the inventor to sign the application papers is alleged, the circumstances of the presentation of the application papers and of the refusal must be specified in a statement of facts by the person who presented the inventor with the application papers and/or to whom the refusal was made. Statements by a party not present when an oral refusal is made will not be accepted.

Proof that a bona fide attempt was made to present a copy of the application papers (specification, including claims, drawings, and oath or declaration) to the nonsigning inventor for signature, but the inventor refused to accept delivery of the papers or expressly stated that the application papers should not be sent, may be sufficient. When there is an express oral refusal, that fact along with the time and place of the refusal must be stated in the statement of facts. When there is an express written refusal, a copy of the document evidencing that refusal must be made part of the statement of facts. The document may be redacted to remove material not related to the inventor's reasons for refusal.

When it is concluded by the 37 CFR 1.47 applicant that a nonsigning inventor's conduct constitutes a refusal, all facts upon which the conclusion is based should be stated in a statement of facts in support of the petition or directly in the petition. If there is documentary evidence to support facts alleged in the petition or any statement of facts, such evidence should be submitted. *Whenever a nonsigning inventor gives a reason for refusing to sign the application oath or declaration, that reason should be stated in the petition.*

(Emphasis added.)

With respect to Item (3), the nonsigning inventor's last known address has not been provided.

With regard to Item (4), the declaration is not executed by all the joint inventors. Specifically, Mohammed Swaleh is identified as an inventor in the published international application (PCT/US04/38130) but is not identified as an inventor on the declaration. Petitioner has not presented evidence from the International Bureau that Ms. Swaleh was removed as an inventor from the international application. Thus, the declaration is not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.497(a) and (b) and is unacceptable. A newly executed declaration is required, in compliance with 37 CFR 1.497(a) and (b).

In sum, Petitioner has satisfied Items (1). However, Petitioner has not satisfied Item (2), (3) and (4) by demonstrating: (1) a *bona fide* attempt was made to present a *copy of the application papers for U.S. application 10/579,513 (specification, including claims, drawings, and declaration)* to the nonsigning inventor for his signature; (2) Mr. Musa's refusal to sign, either in writing or by telephone, these documents; (3) by providing a declaration, in compliance with 37 CFR 1.497(a) and (b), executed by all the joint inventors and (4) by providing the last known address of the nonsigning inventor.

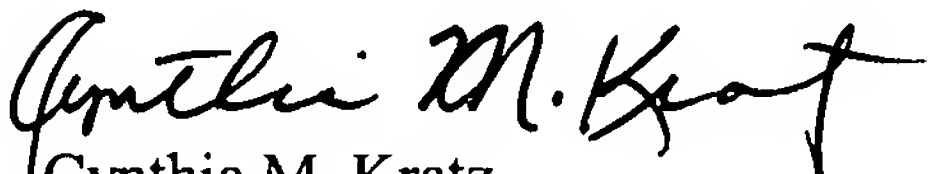
For the reasons set forth above, the evidence submitted does not support a finding that the nonsigning inventor refuses to sign the application at this time. Accordingly, it is inappropriate to accord the national stage application status under 37 CFR §1.47(a) at this time.

CONCLUSION

The petition under 37 CFR §1.47(a) is **DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE**.

Any reconsideration on the merits of the petition under 37 CFR §1.47(a) must be filed within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Any reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition Under 37 CFR §1.47(a)." No petition fee is required. Any further extensions of time available may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Any further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed to the Mail Stop PCT, Commissioner for Patents, Office of PCT Legal Administration, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, with the contents of the letter marked to the attention of the Office of PCT Legal Administration.



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